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## USU Faculty Senate Minutes, October 6, 2014

Utah State University

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**USU FACULTY SENATE  
MINUTES  
OCTOBER 6, 2014  
Merrill-Cazier Library, Room 154**

**Call to Order**

Doug Jackson-Smith called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. The minutes of September 8, 2014 were adopted.

**Announcements – Yanghee Kim**

**Roll Call.** Members are reminded to sign the role sheet at each meeting.

**Faculty Forum Reminder.** Senators are asked to solicit ideas for discussion topics, to be sure to attend the forum and to invite their colleagues to attend as well.

**Making Motions.** Doug explained that as FS President, he is not eligible to make or second motions, but he may ask for them to come from the Senate floor.

**University Business – President Stan Albrecht, Noelle Cockett**

Provost Cockett informed the senate that two Deans search committees are underway. John Allen is the chair for the Dean of Libraries search, and Chris Hailey is chair of the Dean of Science search. The President spoke about the likelihood of funding for building projects out of the upcoming legislative session. The new state crime lab is most likely to receive funding, which will limit available funds for the STEM package. If this is the case the new Biology building may face delays, and the focus will shift on securing funds for a new clinical services building instead. The President will attend the groundbreaking ceremony in Brigham City on Thursday for the new building projects there.

**Information Items**

**Human Resources Information on Code Changes Affecting Faculty – BrandE Faupell.**

There are three HR Policies being submitted for changes and complete information was included in the Agenda Packet. The policies are the Consulting Leave Policy 377, Other Leave Policy (369) and the Appointments of Opportunity typically known as Dual Career (385).

**Update on Section 100 Change Describing Position of VP for Research and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies – Doug Jackson-Smith.** In the previous senate meeting it was noted by a senator that language defining the graduate studies roles for this combined position had been omitted from the code during the merge. This was simply an oversight and the appropriate parties will correct it and send it through all appropriate approval channels.

Ronda Callister moved to suspend the rules for order of business to have the PTR Code Change discussion first and the Reports section of the agenda at the end of the meeting. Leslie Bott seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

## **Unfinished Business**

**PTR Code Change Discussion & Advisory Votes – Doug Jackson-Smith.** A four page information insert was included in the agenda packet for the senator's information in order to review the history of this issue; it also included current versions of the code and the Board of Regents code. The progression of the process and minutes from relevant FS meetings is posted on the Faculty Senate web page at: <http://www.usu.edu/fsenate/posttenure/>. Senators are strongly encouraged to take time to read and review these issues to make the discussions on the senate floor more productive.

Doug posed questions to the senate to consider, first, if we need to proceed with discussion on the issue or if the issue should be dropped. Second, if we do choose to continue discussing the issue, should the past advisory votes be used to guide the conversation? Doug asked for a motion to limit the discussion time to 5 minutes per topic. A third topic (focusing on remaining areas where faculty senate guidance would be helpful) might be addressed if we have time. The plan is to end the discussion at 4:00 so that the rest of the senate business could be addressed.

Robert Schmidt moved that debates on future motions be limited to 5 minutes. A second was received and the motion passed unanimously.

A senator commented that the Regents code is very specific about how the PTR process should be handled and he feels like we are ignoring it. A copy of the Regent's policy was included in the FS agenda packet and was shared with the senate. Discussions suggested a divergence of views on what are the implications or Regents' code for the effort to revise USU's PTR policy.

A senator suggested that any discussion of PTR is out of order as the discussion was tabled in the final FS meeting last spring. Becki Lawver clarified that only one particular motion was tabled last spring, not the entire issue. The minutes for the meeting indicate that voting on a motion regarding professional development plans was tabled.

Rhonda Callister made a motion to vote on proceeding with the discussion of the Post Tenure Review Process and Andy Walker seconded the motion. A five minute discussion raised the following issues

- What power does the FS have to change PTR policy.
- The existing version of the policy is a 5 year review, which could lead to sanctions including dismissal as a possible consequence. Professional development plans are primarily instigated by the department head, and are not necessarily linked to the PTR peer committee review.
- The proposed plan seems easier to understand and involves less work for committees and the individual faculty and is a less time consuming process as the annual review is utilized in the process.
- There was agreement that the annual reviews should be worth something and that developing code changes to allow the annual review to count for PTR is a more efficient process.
- There is disagreement that the proposed plan will save time if it is initiated every two or three years.
- Suggestions were made that we should consider what our sister institutions in the state are doing on this issue.

Voting on the motion to continue the discussion of the post tenure review process was conducted by a raise of hands.

Yes – 37

No – 10

Abstentions – 1

The motion passed.

Robert Schmidt moved to use the past Faculty Senate advisory votes as a non-binding guide. Yanghee Kim seconded. A five minute discussion included the following ideas:

- Senators want an assurance that the votes are non-binding and there will be the ability to change things if necessary. Other senators felt that the term “as a non-binding guide” answers that concern.
- One senator noted that he would like to revisit the 3 year rolling review vote at some point before sending any package to PRPC for code drafting.
- A senator reiterated the suggestion that some of the advisory votes taken previously were not in alignment with the Regents code. He questions if we want to make massive changes to code that will need to be approved by the regents that could potentially prompt statewide changes at other institutions. We should review what our sister institutions are doing for PTR.
- The Regents Code only requires institutions to develop procedures for PTR that are consistent with local institutional policies and accreditation standards. How is what we are proposing or doing not in line with the Regents policy?
- A senator remarked that the current code is not perfect, but it is by and large working. We should take care in our discussions to heed what the regents expect. Also it is ok to accept the concept of sunk costs in relation to the time and effort spent on this review over the last 3 years. He also feels that the motion to table was misrepresented in the minutes of last spring that the motion was to table the whole discussion.

As the time limit for discussion was reached, a motion was made and seconded and passed to extend the discussion by 5 more minutes (until 4:00).

Doug asked for President Albrecht to share his thoughts on the issue. The President expressed that in his view the Regents policy grants flexibility in the development of the post tenure review process and that this conversation should continue. He does not feel that we should worry too much about our peer institutions in the state, as the only peer we have is U of U and we would not want our PTR policy modeled after or tied to the smaller institutions around the state.

Doug assured senators who feel that some of the advisory votes were in conflict with the regent's code that nothing will be sent to PRPC for drafting actual code language until we are ready to pass the whole package, so that they may be able to draft the entire code at once instead of piece by piece.

A vote on Robert Schmidt's motion to use past advisory votes as a non-binding guide was taken and the motion passed by clear majority voice vote.

A motion was made by Mark McClellan and seconded by Rhonda Callister to remove from the table the issue of what the PTR committee should be expected to do, and its relationship to the PDP.

Discussion of the function of the Peer Review Committee followed and some remaining guidance issues were discussed. Previous votes suggest that the PRC would perform an evaluation of the faculty member's multiyear record. The basic standard for appraisal shall be whether the faculty member under review discharges conscientiously and with professional competence the duties appropriately associated with his or her position. Discussion and suggestions focused on framing questions for future non-binding votes:

- What should happen if the Peer Review Committee indicates that the faculty member is or is not meeting the standard of performance?
  - **If not meeting standard – launch Professional Development Plan process? (YES/NO)**
- If meeting standard – end process?
  - **Would DH be allowed to initiate a PDP without PRC concurrence? (Yes/No)**
- If meeting standard – end process?
  - **Would DH be allowed to initiate a PDP without PRC concurrence? (Yes/No)**

As the time limit for the PTR discussion on the agenda was about to expire, Andy Walker moved to extend the discussion another 25 minutes. The motion was seconded by Charles Waugh. The motion passed by majority voice vote.

President Albrecht commented that in two of the last three legislative sessions, we have been able to push back the efforts of some to eliminate the tenure process all together. This discussion is worth the effort and shows the PTR development process is a faculty driven process. Someone asked if the 5 year review currently practiced was a mandate from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (our accrediting body), the President and Provost will look into this and see if that was part of the old standards and if the policy has been changed.

Discussion continued around four key questions (identified by Andy Walker) and guided by Doug Jackson-Smiths prepared power point slides, and included the questions of:

- **When does the process get triggered?**
  - Multi Year Annual Review... we need to clarify whether 1 or multiple negative votes triggers it
  - What other paths may trigger a review?
- **Who is involved in making these decisions?**
  - Department Heads? Others?
- **What happens as a result of a decision they are not meeting standards?**
  - Professional Development Plan?
- **Alignment with Board of Regents Policies & accreditation agencies**

Additional issues include:

- **Should the MYARs replace the regular annual reviews for post-tenure faculty? (Y/N)**
  - If yes – should MYARs be written in code to ensure they cover the same territory as the current annual reviews?
- **Under what circumstances (if any) can a faculty member request formation of a PRC (other than a triggered formal negative MYAR)?**
  - Revisit earlier vote saying we can ask for one at any time?
  - What would PRC be asked to do in this case?
  - How would this differ from a promotion committee?

NOTE: Bold represents questions posed by senators during the discussion)

Andy Walker suggested that the faculty senate president form a working group to consider these remaining issues and address concerns about Regents' policies.

Concerns expressed during this discussion centered on

- Department heads having too much power,
- A concern that, parts of code are out of alignment with regent's code, and making sure that accreditation alignment is to be considered when making changes to the code.

It was recognized by Doug that there was a motion still on the floor to remove the PTR discussion from the table that we had not voted on yet. Doug noted that this discussion was about that, but no vote was taken.

Discussion continued with a suggestion that an option be created for faculty to call for a Post Tenure Review Committee, especially if faculty were not meeting expectations in parts of their roles so that they could see if the committee sees something other than what the department head sees. This might allow any problems to be corrected when they are small so that faculty might avoid a review that they are not meeting expectations in all of the role statement. Discussion continued along the lines of what triggers reviews, who develops the plans, department heads, faculty, etc.

A motion to have the faculty senate president appoint a special committee or working group to hammer out the details of this discussion before our next meeting was made by Becki Lawver and seconded by Andy Walker.

Doug noted the previous motion that was still on the floor.

With the senate's permission Doug asked to officially substitute that motion with a vote on the motion to appoint a special committee or working group. There were no objections and the motion to appoint a special committee passed unanimously.

### **New Business**

Code Change 402.12.3 Committee on Committees term (first reading).....Stephan Bialkowski

No new business was addressed due to lack of time. It will be brought forward at the next Faculty Senate meeting in December.

### **Reports**

Educational Policies Committee Annual Report.....Larry Smith  
EPC Items.....Larry Smith  
Honors Program Report.....Kristine Miller  
Libraries Advisory Council Report.....Dan Davis  
Parking Committee Report.....James Nye

No Reports were presented due to lack of time. It will be brought forward at the next Faculty Senate meeting in December.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.